

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments in the Office Action mailed June 12, 2007 have been carefully considered. Claims 40-54 have been newly added. Claim 1 has been amended. Support for the changes can be found throughout the specification and figures of the application, e.g., in Fig. 10. No new matter has been added.

Reconsideration of the pending claims is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-9, 15, 21, 22, and 24-38 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2005/0149161 to Eidenschink et al. (hereinafter "Eidenschink"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a rotatable sheath including a first portion arranged in radial alignment with a first portion of an unexpanded balloon and a second portion arranged in radial alignment with a second portion of the unexpanded balloon. The first portion of the unexpanded balloon has a first outer diameter and the second portion has a second outer diameter that is different than the first outer diameter.

In contrast, Eidenschink fails to disclose or suggest a rotatable sheath including a first portion arranged in radial alignment with a first portion of an unexpanded balloon and a second portion arranged in radial alignment with a second portion of the unexpanded balloon where the first portion of the unexpanded balloon has a first outer diameter and the second portion has a second outer diameter that is different than the first outer diameter.

Rather, FIG. 15 in Eidenschink shows a sheath arranged over an *expanded* balloon 114. Furthermore, when the balloon 114 is unexpanded, as shown in FIG. 14, the sheath 102 only extends over a constant diameter portion of the balloon 114. The ends of the sheath 102 are folded over towards the center of the sheath 102 and are not arranged in radial alignment with different diameter portions of the balloon 114.

None of the embodiments of Eidenschink include portions of a rotatable sheath arranged in radial alignment with different diameter portions of an unexpanded balloon. Moreover, no motivation is provided in Eidenschink or any of the cited references to arrange the sheath over

different diameter portions of an unexpanded balloon. In fact, arranging the sheath portions in this manner would destroy the functionality of the sheath in Eidenschink. The rolled ends of the sheath 102 of Eidenschink protect the otherwise exposed ends of the stent 120 during delivery. See paragraph [0125] of Eidenschink.

For at least these reasons, Eidenschink does not anticipate or suggest claim 1. Claims 2-9, 15, 21, 22, and 24-38 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-9, 15, 21, 22, and 24-38 is respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

New Claims

Claims 40-54 have been newly added. Features deleted from claims 25 and 26 have been incorporated into newly added claims 40-50 to correct formal matters. To the extent the above rejection applies to claims 40-54, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 40-50 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over Eidenschink for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. Examination and allowance of claims 40-50 is respectfully requested.

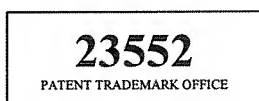
Claim 51 recites, in part, a rotatable sheath including a first tapered end that is configured to complement and arranged in radial alignment with a first tapered end of an unexpanded balloon.

Eidenschink does not disclose or suggest a rotatable sheath including a first tapered end that is configured to complement and arranged in radial alignment with a first tapered end of an unexpanded balloon. Rather, the ends of the sheath 102 in Eidenschink are configured to fold over so as to be arranged in radial alignment with a constant diameter portion of the unexpanded balloon 114.

For at least these reasons, Eidenschink does not anticipate claim 51. Claims 52-54 depend from claim 51 and are allowable over Eidenschink for at least the same reasons. Examination and allowance of claims 51-54 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.



Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

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By: /Joshua N. Randall/
Name: Joshua N. Randall
Reg. No.: 50,719
JNR/JKS